

Asking for Help

On Campus Resources

Campus Ministry
253-535-7464
cmin@plu.edu

Counseling Center
253-535-7206
counseling@plu.edu

Student Health Center
253-535-7337
health@plu.edu

Student Life Office
253-535-7191
slif@plu.edu

Community Resources

Grief and Loss Services
at Good Samaritan Hospice
253-697-7136

GriefWorks
253-333-9420
www.griefworks.org

Separation and Loss Services
at Virginia Mason in Seattle
206-223-6398

PLU Counseling Center
Anderson University Center, Suite 300
Tacoma, WA 98447

Phone: 253-535-7206
Crisis Line: 253-535-7075
Fax: 253-536-5124

counseling@plu.edu
www.plu.edu/counseling



Reference:

*Original material created by
the University of Oregon
Counseling and Testing Center*



Dealing
With
Grief

PLU Counseling Center
University Center 300
Tacoma, WA
253-535-7206

Suggestions for Individuals Dealing With Grief

Talk regularly with a friend. Talking with another about what you think and feel is one of the best things you can do for yourself. It helps relieve some of the pressure you may feel, it can give you a sense of perspective, and it keeps you in touch with others. Look for someone who's a good listener and a caring soul. Then speak what's on your mind and in your heart. If this feels one-sided, let that be okay for this period of our life.

Tell people what helps you and what doesn't. People around you may not understand what you need. So tell them. If hearing your loved one's name spoken aloud by others feels good, say so. If you need more time alone, or assistance with tasks you're unable to complete, or an occasional hug, be honest. People can't read your mind, so you'll have to speak it.

Allow yourself to express whatever emotions you are feeling. A good rule of thumb is this: if you feel like crying then cry. If you feel like laughing, allow yourself to express that.

Carry or wear a linked object. Carry something in your pocket or purse that reminds you of the person who died – a keepsake they gave you perhaps, or a small object they once carried or used, or a memento you select just for this purpose.

Create a memory area at home. In a space that feels appropriate, arrange a small tableau that honors the person: a framed photograph or two, a prized possession or award, something they created, or something they loved.

Structure alone time. Although being around family, friends, and colleagues can be helpful, make sure you also have time to be by yourself. A large part of the grieving process involves what goes on inside yourself - your thoughts, your feelings, your memories, your hopes and dreams

Tips For Family and Friends

The following section will provide some suggestions on how to help a friend or family member in dealing with a loss. Although the grief process is very personal, it is important for them to know that they do not have to go through this alone. You may want to encourage them to talk with yourself, a friend, a counselor or a trusted advisor.

Helpful Responses

Be Empathetic. At the core of each support system lies empathy. Empathy allows the bereaved person to express emotions in a supportive environment.

Get Involved. While it may be uncomfortable, spending time with the grieving person is essential. At times, you may feel as though you are contributing little, however, your sensitivity and support is appreciated

Offer non-Verbal Support. Support can be extended through non-verbal gestures. Ask for permission before offering a hug.

Be an Active Listener. An individual provides the best support by listening. It's normal for a supporter to not know exactly what to say. Encourage discussion, but don't force conversation from the bereaved individual.

Unsupportive Responses

- Neglecting to consider the individualized nature of the grieving process
- Forcing the grieving individual to discuss the death or loss
- Failing to include the mourner in decision-making
- Trying to relate to the bereaved person by discussing non-generalized personal experiences.
- Appearing reluctant to discuss issues of death and loss

Minimizing the loss by stating, "Think how much worse it could be."